

GX and Windows XP

1. Introduction

The V3.1e release of GX.EXE is the first version of GX to use Windows XP Visual Styles on Microsoft Windows XP. Although all previous versions of GX.EXE function correctly on Windows XP they only provide a "legacy" look-and-feel. GX.EXE V3.1e is the first version of GX to provide a "Windows XP themed" look-and-feel.

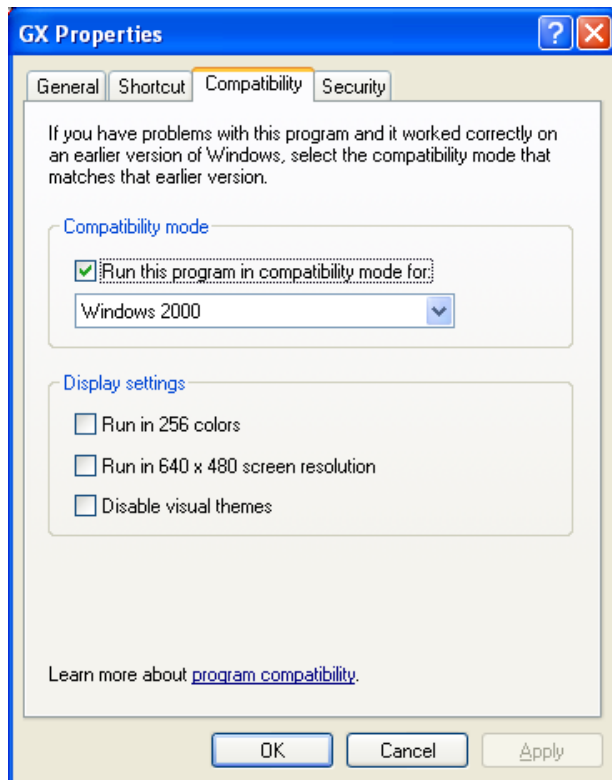
This document describes a number of issues, which may be perceived as problems, when GX V3.1e, or later, is operating in Windows XP mode.

A number of these problems have been reported as "a problem in GX V3.1" when in effect they are really issues upgrading to GX V3.1e, or later, on Windows XP.

2. Disabling Windows XP Mode

2.1 Disabling Windows XP Mode (GX Version V3.1e to V3.1n)

By default GX.EXE V3.1e, and later, operate in "Windows XP themed" mode on Windows XP. This mode, which is responsible for most of the apparent problems (see below), is disabled by updating the GX shortcut to force it to be run in "legacy" mode (e.g. to provide a Windows 2000 look-and-feel). For example:



2.2 Disabling Windows XP Mode (GX Version V3.2, and later)

GX V3.2 (and later) requires the presence of an extra file. GX.EXE.MANIFEST to allow it to use the Windows XP Visual Styles. This file is known as the *Manifest File* and is used to inform Windows XP which version of the Windows common control DLL to be used for GX. Windows XP is supplied with two versions of the same DLL, V5.0 and V6.0 which support pre-Windows XP and Windows XP instances of the common controls (edit boxes, buttons, etc.). Applications that do not have a manifest file will have the default version of any DLL's loaded. In the case of the Windows common controls DLL this default version is V5.0. **Thus, if GX.EXE V3.2, or later, is loaded without the presence of the manifest file all controls will appear in "Windows Classic" style.**

IMPORTANT NOTE: IF GX V3.1e TO V3.1n IS UPGRADED TO V3.2, OR LATER, VIA A GX DOWN-LOAD FROM THE gxupdates FOLDER ON THE SERVER, GX V3.2 WILL APPEAR TO REVERT TO NON-XP MODE. THE GX.EXE.MANIFEST FILE MUST BE COPIED TO THE SAME FOLDER AS GX.EXE V3.2 (OR LATER).

GX V3.1e (and all versions up to V3.1n) had the manifest file linked into the application so it would always appear using the Windows XP Visual Styles unless the "compatibility mode" option had been setup in its shortcut properties (as described in section 2.1). Note that this did not revert all controls to the pre-Windows XP state, in particular Speedbase window buttons still appeared in the Windows XP style regardless of the compatibility mode.

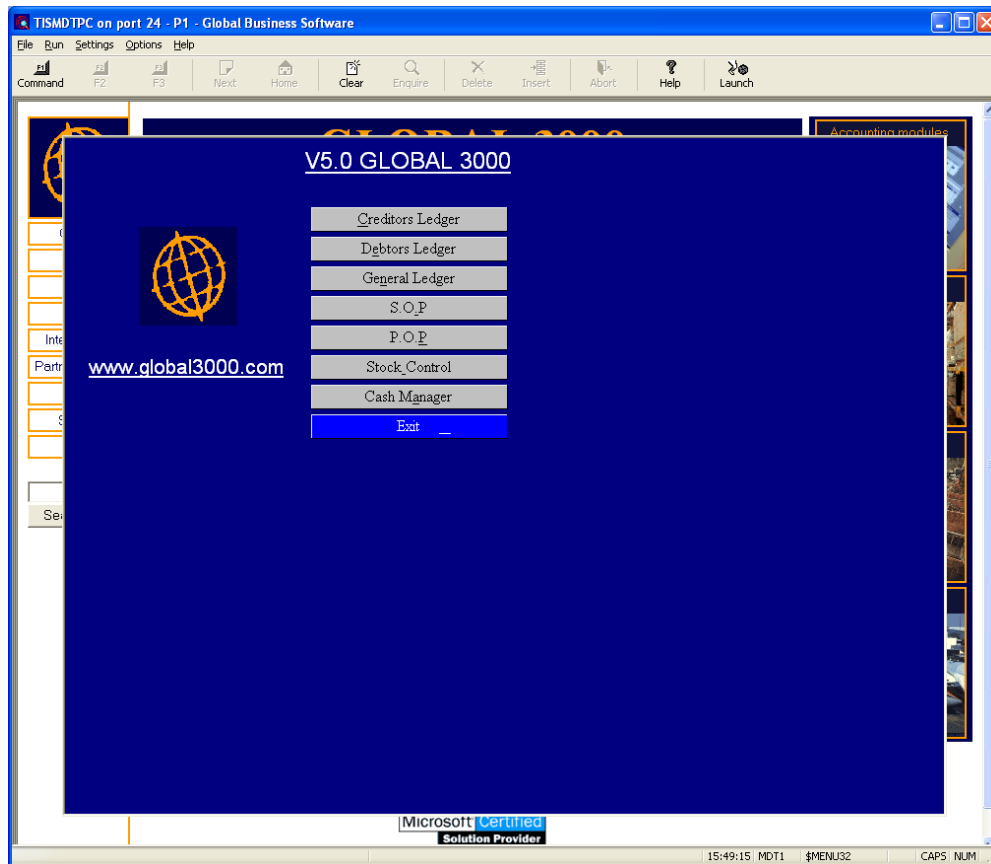
The manifest file has been unlinked from GX V3.2 which means it **must** reside on the same directory as GX.EXE if the Windows XP Visual Styles are required. This combination of GX.EXE and GX.EXE.MANIFEST allows the pre-Windows XP look to be selected by simply deleting the manifest file and no further configuration changes are required. For example, the compatibility mode setting (described in section 2.1) can be left unchanged.

3. The Perceived Problems in Windows XP Themed Mode

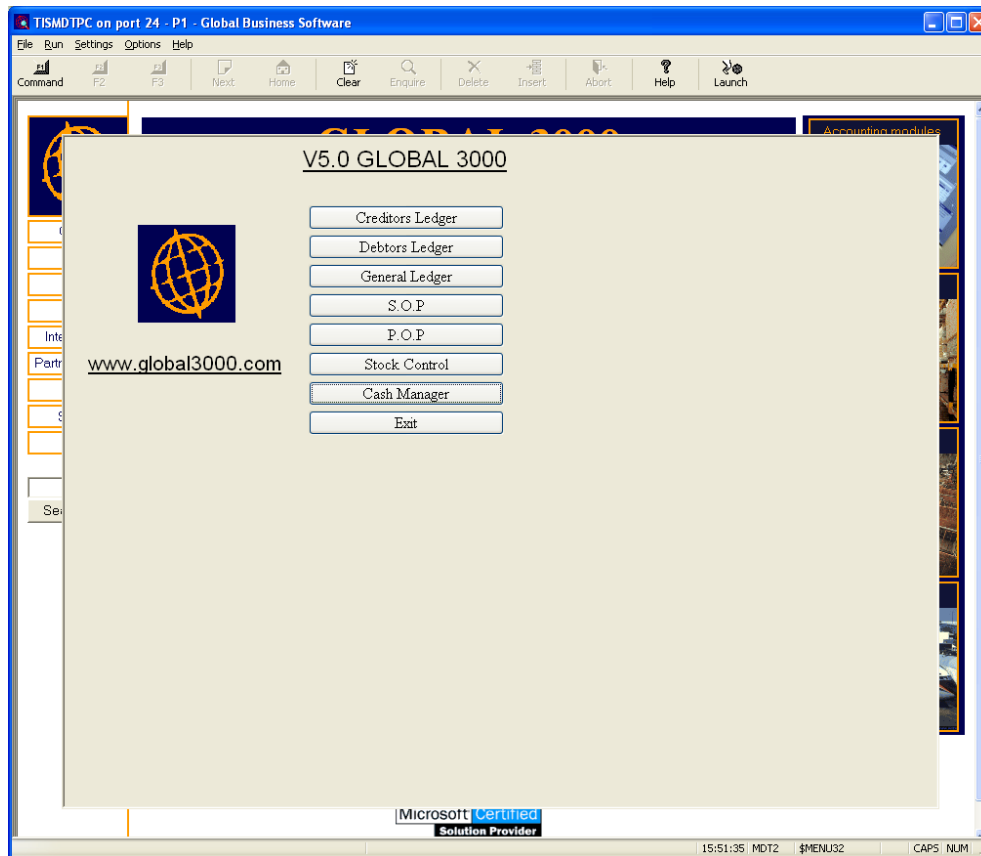
This section describes the various "problems" that may be noticed when running GX on Windows XP in "Windows XP Themed" mode.

3.1 Button Colours

When operating in "Windows 2000 compatibility" mode, GX offers a rich selection of colour options for drawing button style pop-menus. For example:



The same menu, with the same GX colour customisations, will appear in the rather more sober "Windows XP Themed" mode:



Note the immediate loss of the "currently selected menu line" colour. This lack of full colour customization on button-style menus on Windows XP themed mode results in the apparent loss of the following menu line features:

- The current selected menu line colour cusotmisation;

- The protected line(s) colour customisation.

These lost colour settings can only be restored by disabling Windows XP mode as described in section 2.

3.2 Menu Line Numbering

In addition to the loss of menu colour customisations (see section 3.1) GX button style menus also appear to lose the menu line numbering feature, which is normally enabled if the MenuLineNumbering feature in the GX.INI file is enabled.

The menu line numbering feature can only be restored by disabling Windows XP mode as described in section 2.

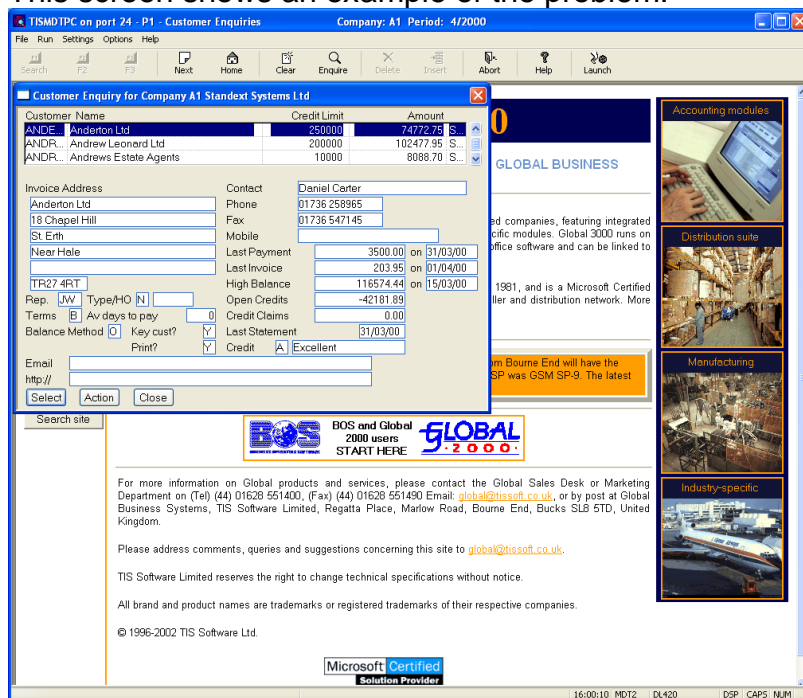
3.3 Use of Mouse disables Accelerator Keys

The suppression of underlined shortcut characters (accelerators) was introduced in Windows 2000. Its effect can be seen on the menu bar where the menu headings are

displayed without indicating the shortcut character. If a menu heading is clicked then the drop-down menu will also be displayed without showing any indication of the shortcut characters. However, if the keyboard is used to activate a menu, as soon as the Alt key is pressed, the underlines appear immediately. The underlines will also appear on the drop-down menu as well.

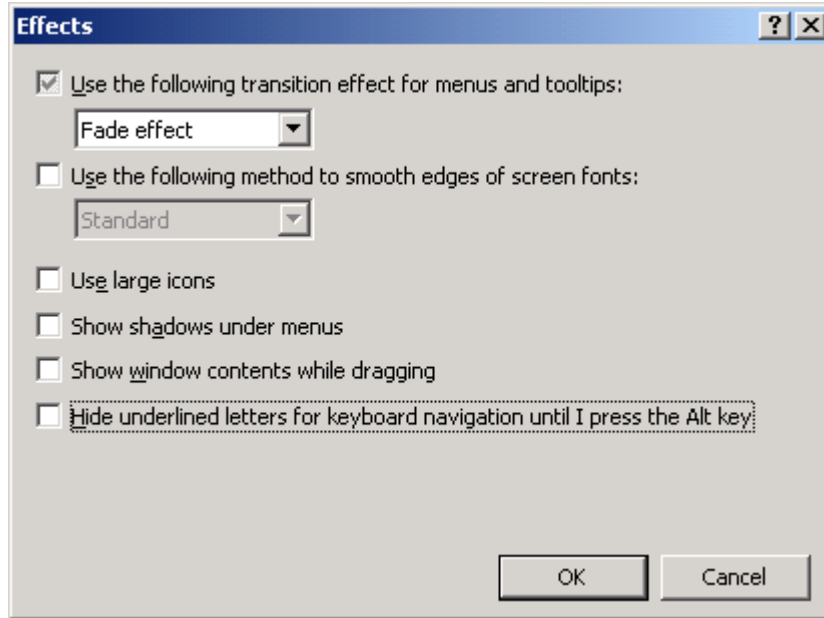
On Windows 2000 this feature only affects the menu bar but on Windows XP it has been extended to windows within applications as well. Thus, if an item is selected via the mouse (e.g. a \$MENU32 menu entry) the underlined characters will also be suppressed on the next window (either another menu or a Speedbase window). Furthermore, on Windows XP, the underlines do not appear even when the Alt key is pressed. If underlined letters are required on every window when that window appears a Windows XP Control Panel setting must be altered. To modify this setting, run Control Panel and select the Display option. Click on the "Appearance" tab and then the "Effects" button. On the resulting dialogue box make sure the "Hide underlined letters for keyboard navigation until I press the Alt key" is **unchecked**.

This screen shows an example of the problem:

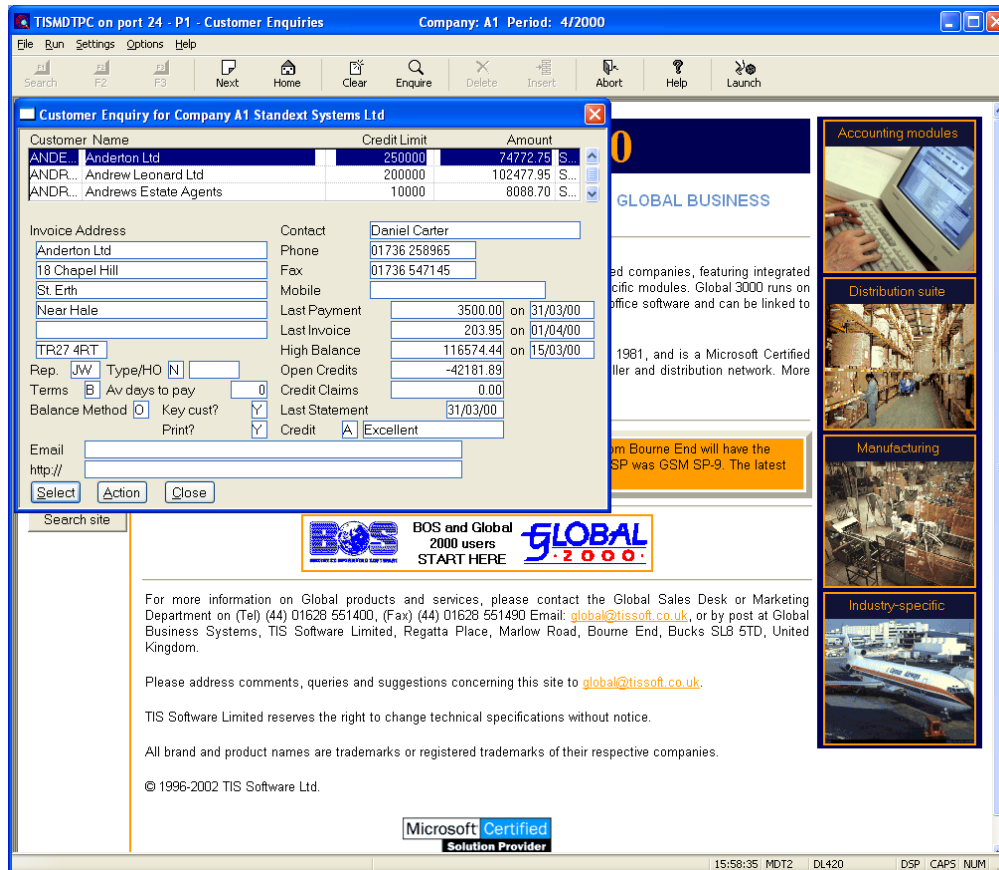


In this example the "S" of Select, the "A" of Action and the "C" of Close in the three buttons should be underlined.

This screen shows how to set the option in Windows Control Panel:



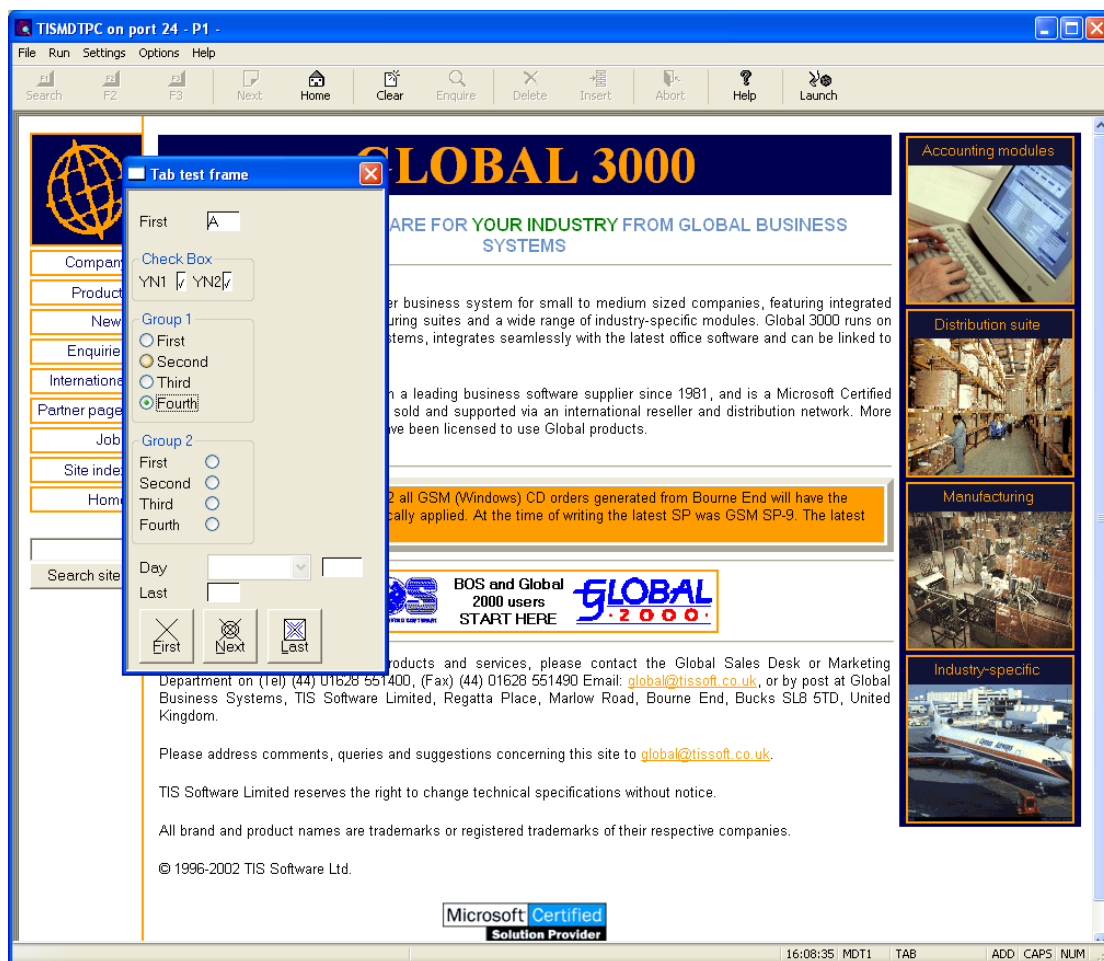
The results of the change are shown here:



3.4 Mouse Hover over Controls

When the mouse is moved to hover over a new control, Windows XP illustrates the mouse movement by highlighting the control with a (normally) yellow border. This yellow border is merely to inform the operator that the mouse is hovering over a control (e.g. a button or a radio button option). Do not confuse the (normally) yellow "hover border" with the (normally) block "in-focus" rectangle which **does** indicate which control (e.g. button) has the current focus.

The following screen shot shows both the genuine "in-focus" rectangle over the "Fourth" option in the set of radio buttons; and the slightly misleading "hover" border on the "Second" option. This situation was achieved merely by moving the mouse from the "Fourth" option to the "Second" option:



4. Summary of GX on Windows XP Options

The various combinations of GX version, Short-Cut settings, Control Panel settings and GX versions are described in the following table:

Options	GX V3.1e to V3.1n	GX V3.2, or later
Default XP mode (section 2.1); Hide underlined etc. unchecked (section 3.3)	Windows XP mode but with the "problems" described in sections 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3.	Windows XP mode but with the "problems" described in sections 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3.
Default XP mode (section 2.1); Hide underlined etc. checked (section 3.3)	Windows XP mode but with the "problems" described in sections 3.1 and 3.2.	Windows XP mode but with the "problems" described in sections 3.1 and 3.2.
Win2000 compatibility mode (section 2.1); Hide underlined etc. unchecked (section 3.3)	None of the problems described in sections 3.1, 3.2 or 3.3 but GX still displays a residue of XP mode (i.e. GX V3.2 appears slightly different to pre-V3.1e).	None of the problems described in sections 3.1, 3.2 or 3.3 but GX still displays a residue of XP mode (i.e. GX V3.2 appears slightly different to pre-V3.1e).
Win2000 compatibility mode (section 2.1); Hide underlined etc. checked (section 3.3)	None of the problems described in sections 3.1, 3.2 or 3.3 but GX still displays a residue of XP mode (i.e. GX V3.2 appears slightly different to pre-V3.1e).	None of the problems described in sections 3.1, 3.2 or 3.3 but GX still displays a residue of XP mode (i.e. GX V3.2 appears slightly different to pre-V3.1e).
Default XP mode (2.1); Hide underlined etc. unchecked (3.3); GX.EXE.MANIFEST deleted (2.2)	Not applicable (no Manifest File to delete).	None of the problems described in sections 3.1, 3.2 or 3.3. GX V3.2 appears identical to pre-V3.1e.
Default XP mode (2.1); Hide underlined etc. checked (3.3); GX.EXE.MANIFEST deleted (2.2)	Not applicable (no Manifest File to delete).	None of the problems described in sections 3.1, 3.2 or 3.3. GX V3.2 appears identical to pre-V3.1e.
Win2000 compatibility mode (section 2.1); Hide underlined etc. unchecked (section 3.3); GX.EXE.MANIFEST deleted (2.2)	Not applicable (no Manifest File to delete).	None of the problems described in sections 3.1, 3.2 or 3.3. GX V3.2 appears identical to pre-V3.1e.
Win2000 compatibility mode (section 2.1); Hide underlined etc. checked (section 3.3); GX.EXE.MANIFEST deleted (2.2)	Not applicable (no Manifest File to delete).	None of the problems described in sections 3.1, 3.2 or 3.3. GX V3.2 appears identical to pre-V3.1e.